

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Resistance Activities in Radviliškis Rayon

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REFERENCES

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1. [REDACTED]

In 1948 a big unit of partisans operated in the vicinity under the leadership of a man named Kuročka. The number of partisans under his command amounted to approximately 120; at least he attacked towns with such a force. [REDACTED]

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One day a man in militia officer's uniform came to Apilinkai on a motorcycle accompanied by another man sitting behind him. [REDACTED] this militia or MVD officer drive to the house where the militia and istrebitel office was. [REDACTED] this officer reviewed the militia-men and istrebiteli, checked to see if their weapons were in order, and if they had enough ammunition for the guns and machine guns and enough hand grenades. He even supplied the militiamen with ammunition from a bag on his motorcycle, and then departed, urging the militia to be on alert since there were many partisans in the vicinity. The next morning at 0400 hours Apilinkai was raided by the so-called "army" of Kuročka. The militiamen and istrebiteli just fled when they noticed the partisans approaching. Among the partisans who searched the militiaman's house [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] was the famous Kuročka. The partisans did nothing to the militiaman's wife, only mocking her because she pretended to be ill (the partisans laughed, saying that she would have offered liquor and sandwiches if militia had come, but when partisans came she played ill). The partisans did not take any weapons, just ammunition. [REDACTED] the partisans took only ammunition, not the weapons, from the militia post - apparently they had weapons enough. Besides ammunition, the partisans also took all food available at the house and at other houses, but did not take grain, cattle, pigs, or hens. The militiaman's family remained without food, except that they still had some grain, one cow, and a pig. The partisans departed after about one or two hours, taking their loot along in horse carts. The partisans had a stronghold in a swamp about

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STATE	X	ARMY	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC					
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(Note: Washington Distribution Indicated By "X"; Field Distribution By "#".)

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-2-

25X1 eight km from Apilinkai. [redacted] in winter 1949/50 [redacted]
 25X1 the partisans had already abandoned the place; there was a farmhouse on an
 25X1 island surrounded by a swamp with only one access to the island, [redacted] 25X1
 25X1 [redacted] Soviet army and MVD units attacked this
 25X1 stronghold with 500 men and were repulsed with heavy casualties and without
 success. [redacted] it would have been sufficient to have about
 twenty men with machine guns to keep invaders off the access to their strong-
 hold, having only few guards around the camp on other sides of the island.

2. The partisans grew quite bold in winter 1948/49 and attacked not only Apilinkai but also the nearby town of Jeremiski. In Jeremiski there was a large MVD unit with a Soviet major in command. The partisans had shot all the MVD men they caught and destroyed their homes, but this major was never molested, and after several attacks the Soviets grew suspicious. When this major disappeared with the partisans during the last raid early in 1949, and it became apparent that he had joined the partisans. This major never was caught [redacted] 25X1

25X1 [redacted] There were many partisan supporters among the
 population. Among the partisans there were, besides the local people, Latvians, Russians, Ukrainians, and others. Eventually it became difficult for neutral people to keep out of this feud between partisans and the militia, istrebiteli, and army, because each side demanded assistance and persecuted people even for sympathy for the other side. One either had to hate the militia and istrebiteli and join the partisans, or hate the partisans and help the militia and istrebiteli, and once one started to help one side one was out of neutrality. Until 1950 it was a real war, and only in 1950 did it calm down a little.

25X1 [redacted] the number of partisans did not decrease, but increased due
 25X1 to the deportations; many persons who feared deportation joined the partisans.

25X1 [redacted] though the activities of partisans ceased in this
 vicinity, the resistance might be only hidden and the active partisans re-
 treated into regions with bigger woods. The counter-actions were also severe, and 1949 was the climax of the fighting. When a partisan or partisan supporter was caught he was tortured to learn the hiding-places of the partisans or the names of the supporters. [redacted] a young man, whose father fled to Germany, who remained in Lithuania. This boy had joined the partisans and was caught by the militia. He was compelled to betray his comrades and then was released and lived in Apilinkai, but he was found shot by partisans in his home later. The salesman of the local cooperative was arrested because during a battle between four partisans and several militiamen two partisans were killed and on the bodies were found cigarettes of the Krasnaya Zvezda brand, and it was generally known that this brand of cigarettes was available only in the cooperative shop at Apilinkai. The salesman was tried and sent to Siberia, and his family was deported later; his older son escaped and disappeared—he obviously joined the partisans.

3.

25X1 [redacted]
 25X1 [redacted] militiamen discussed the partisan
 25X1 problems with other people [redacted]
 told about guards having been shot by partisans at the bridge of Pardušisa,

25X1 [redacted] 25X1
 25X1 [redacted]

25X1 [redacted] The Soviets usually got drunk and talked quite freely [redacted] 25X1
 25X1 [redacted] Two Russian
 25X1 officers were arrested because of having disclosed secret matters while drink-
 ing [redacted] These officers were said to
 have been sentenced to seven years' forced labor [redacted] 25X1
 25X1 [redacted] 25X1
 25X1 [redacted]

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-3-

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4. By Easter 1949 Kuročka was shot because he became too bold: twelve partisans, among them Kuročka, his wife, and another woman came to a village near Apilinkai to celebrate Easter and drank there quite openly until early in the morning. Istrebiteli forces were alerted and about twenty-five istrebiteli and militia surrounded Kuročka and his companions. The istrebiteli lost seven men, but Kuročka and seven other partisans were shot dead. Two of the partisans were taken alive since they were too drunk to resist, and the two women raised their hands to surrender, but when the militia approached and stopped shooting one of the women ran away. A militia lieutenant remained with the other woman, and the rest followed the running woman in order to get her alive. When the woman remained alone with the lieutenant, he allowed her to lower her hands, and at this moment she shot the lieutenant and escaped because the other militia-men were too far away. Later the rest of the militiamen returned without having caught the other woman. Among the two partisans found dead was a man from Sadova [redacted] a worker allegedly loyal to the Soviet regime. After Kuročka was shot, his partisan unit dissolved and operated only in small groups. They also abandoned the stronghold in the swamp near Apilinkai, so that in winter 1949/50 firewood was made there. The farmer-inhabitants of this farm were deported despite the fact that they claimed to have had no opportunity to resist the partisans or contact militia forces.
5. In summer 1950 partisans shot from ambush two Russians who were going with the community chairman of Apilinkai and the deputy chairman to the neighboring village. One of the Russians was on a bicycle, and the three others in a horse-cart. The horse was shot but the two Lithuanians were not even wounded. The chairman went again to the same village the next day, and people rumored that he was a friend of the partisans. The chairman stated that he was just not a coward and had been lucky, but the rumor remained that he was a clandestine partisan supporter. Shortly before the repatriation four partisans were rounded up about four kilometers from Apilinkai. They had been followed by the istrebiteli for a long period of time in order to find their supporters and their hiding-place. The partisans had been working in the village nearby pretending to be agricultural workers; but, when they noticed that about twenty-five istrebiteli were surrounding the village, they fled. In a nearby grove they stopped, apparently noticing the intention of the pursuers to follow them to their hiding-place, and fought until all four were killed in action. The istrebiteli lost seven dead.
6. A militiaman without rank received 450 rubles per month, plus uniform. The uniform was blue, and the cap was without the red rim of the MVD. With the jacket, militiamen wore breeches and red epaulettes. There was a militia lieutenant in Apilinkai who seemed to be the chief of the militia post there, to which post belonged twenty-five istrebiteli. There was one office for both militia and istrebiteli, and all official business was performed in the common office. Istrebiteli were young boys from Apilinkai who lived at their homes and were called together in emergencies by the militia lieutenant. Until 1950, istrebiteli had no uniform, but in 1950 they received the gray uniform of the MVD field forces, only with the difference that istrebiteli did not wear epaulettes. This uniform was available for purchase on the market and cost 700 rubles for jacket and breeches. Istrebiteli received 550 rubles per month, i.e., more than a militiaman. The Lithuanian population called the istrebiteli simply strebuka, but it was forbidden officially since it sounded insulting. The militia and istrebiteli were usually armed with ten-shot semi-automatic rifles which fired separate shots or could switch over to automatic fire like a machine gun. Besides these ten-shot rifles, several istrebiteli also had submachine guns of Soviet make with about seventy shots in the magazine. The partisans apparently had the same kind of weapons, since they did not take any arms with them when they raided Apilinkai in fall 1948, but took only ammunition. Apilinkai was far from railroad connections; the nearest railroad station was Radviliškis, about thirty km away, and there was no bus to Apilinkai. Militia and istrebiteli in Apilinkai had a truck for transportation. There was no telephone at the home of the militiaman, but probably there was one

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in this office. Besides militia and istreibiteli there was another category of persons in possession of firearms, the foresters. They usually had hunting guns, but about 1950 there were so many wolves in the vicinity that the foresters were issued army carbines to fight wolves. A forester had been found killed and eaten by wolves, his hunting gun beside the remains with both barrels fired; apparently he had had no time to reload.

7. Several Lithuanians from this vicinity had fled to Germany. [redacted]

[redacted] There had been many deportations among the Lithuanian population, and former big farmers were the first to be deported. In 1949 and 1950 there were still arrests and deportations because of partisan activities: persons suspected of being partisan supporters were arrested and deported. Practically all the population was split into two parties, pro-Communist and anti-Communist. The feud between partisans and loyalists was so strong that it was practically impossible to stay neutral, and whoever was not active against partisans was immediately suspected of being a partisan supporter. It was generally known that the number of partisans increased with every deportation, despite the actions against partisans and many casualties among them in 1949/50. Despite the deportations, the population in Apilinkai and surroundings remained entirely Lithuanian except for the Soviet militiamen, army, and officials. [redacted]

[redacted] only in the kolkhoz of Apilinkai was there a Russian man who had remained in Lithuania after his military service, because he was married to a Lithuanian woman. This man was appointed chairman of the kolkhoz, but was shot by partisans in 1950, and a Lithuanian Communist became chairman. In such offices there were only persons known to be pro-Communist, and it was not required for a kolkhoz chairman to be familiar with the agricultural side of the enterprise; it was sufficient if the chairman was loyal. The istreibiteli forces could not enlist persons whom the Soviets did not trust completely. [redacted]

Comment: The information in this report was probably true [redacted]

[redacted] however, circumstances may have altered the situation since 1951.

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